

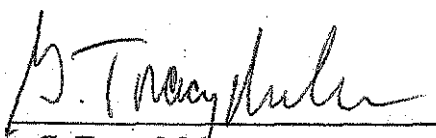
**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Agriculture Interactions on
the Proposed Revisions to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit
Regulation and Effluent Limitations Guidelines and Standards for Concentrated Animal
Feeding Operations
(40 CFR Parts 122 and 412).**

Statement of Involvement

In June 2001, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water (EPA OW) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources and the Environment (USDA NRE), established an interagency workgroup to foster discussions between the agencies on the proposed revision to the rule governing concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO). This interaction is founded on an expectation that improved coordination and information sharing between the agencies will improve the final rule and strengthen the agricultural system perspective in the analysis used to finalize the proposed CAFO rule.

The focus of the EPA/USDA dialogue is on issues identified through USDA's review of the proposed revision to the CAFO rule. On July 2, 2001 the EPA-USDA workgroup convened and developed an approach to pursue discussions between the two agencies. Interagency sub-teams were established to evaluate the issues, develop approaches to address or mitigate concerns, define additional data or information needed to support analyses, and identify potential options that could be explored. Sub-teams will assess their assigned issues and report results to the entire workgroup. The information developed through the sub-team efforts will be elevated to appropriate EPA staff and leadership for consideration in their decision-making process.

USDA's participation in these discussions is to identify issues, suggest strategies or approaches to resolve issues, and provide data and information to support additional analysis. EPA's participation in these discussions is to clarify the intent of sections giving rise to issues, identify additional data or information needed, and thoughtfully assess the information provided by USDA for use in finalizing the CAFO rule. USDA recognizes that the authority to develop the CAFO rule and the effluent limitation guidelines rests solely with EPA, as does the final responsibility for the content of the rule.



G. Tracy Mehan
Assistant Administrator
Office of Water
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

11/23/01

Date



Mack Gray
Acting Deputy Under Secretary
Natural Resources and Environment
U.S. Department of Agriculture

10/06/01

Date